

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated April 18, 2005, which set a three-month period for response, making this amendment due by July 18, 2005.

Claims 11 - 30 are pending in the application.

In the Office Action, claims 11 - 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,408,887 to Yamaoka.

In the present amendment, independent claims 11 and 26 have been amended to more clearly define over the Yamaoka reference. Specifically, claims 11 and 26 now recite that "a width of the first ribs of the extruder sleeve is increased approximately to a width of the second ribs of the extruder screw". Support for this feature can be found in the specification on page 4, lines 19-20.

The Applicant respectfully submits that claims 11 and 26 as amended define a patentably distinct set of features that is not disclosed or suggested by Yamaoka.

Through the above feature of adapting the rib widths to one another, the maximum cross-sectional area for the grooves is achieved. In this manner, the flow resistance is decreased, which also lowers the temperature and introduces less stress into the rubber material. These features and advantages are not suggested or disclosed by Yamaoka.

The Applicant respectfully submits that Yamaoka provides the practitioner with no teaching or suggestion of modifying the disclosed device by adapting the rib widths to one another, as defined in the amended claims. It is respectfully submitted that since the prior art does not suggest the desirability of the claimed invention,

such art cannot establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness as clearly set forth in MPEP section 2143.01.

Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 and reconsideration of the claims as herein amended.

The application in its amended state is believed to be in condition for allowance. However, should the Examiner have any comments or suggestions, or wish to discuss the merits of the application, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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